IMPORTANCE OF NIDRA IN PUBLIC HEALTH

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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda is blend of sciences and philosophy that balances Physical, Mental and Emotional and spiritual components necessary for holistic health. And because of holistic approach, Ayurveda is becoming more and more acceptable globally as it eco-friendly, tonic free and cost effective. The three pillars of life i.e. Trayopstambha are Aahar, Nidra and Brahmacharya. Just as three biological humors i.e. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha & Triguna Satva, Rajas & Tamas regulate the body and mind respectively, Aahar, Nidra and Brahmacharya are essential for promoting healthy life. Ayurveda has recognised Nidra as one of the most important Dimensions of health associated with happiness and good health and is an outcome of relax mental state. The disturbance in Nidra might be related to the life style, environmental influences mental tension changed food habits and day to day stress which ultimately disturb the psychoneuro-biological rhythm of sleep. The aim of this conceptual article is to compile and re-evaluate the various principle related to different aspect of sleep (Nidra).

KEYWORD: Ayurveda, Trayopstambha, Nidra, Sleep.

INTRODUCTION
Stress is considered to be a severe problem nowadays due to changing competitive environment. People differ in their perception, beliefs, attitude, likes and dislikes, societal and cultural background and so forth; these factors in turn create conflict at the workplace and family life.

Several types of principles have been described in Ayurveda. Aahara (food), Nidra (Sleep) and Brahmacharya (Abstinence) are described to be the Trayopstambhas¹¹ (Three supportive pillars). Inclusion of Nidra in the three Upastambhaprove its importance. While discussing about Nidra, the ancient Acharyas have stated that happiness and sorrow, growth and wasting, strength and weakness, virility and impotence and the knowledge and ignorance as well as the existence of life and its cessation depend on the sleep, a detailed description regarding the prevention, maintenance and treatment has been given. Some of the measures that have been advised can be followed in our day to day activities.

Nidra is an effective way to release stress and induce deep physiological rest and relaxation. Rotating the awareness around the different parts of the body in turn, as we do in Yoga Nidra, stimulates the chakras in a fully balanced way. Developing the ability to lax our body and calm our mind is significant because it helps you to control our activation level and channel our focus, both needed for stability. In the fast changing world of today, no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress, whether it is within the family, business, organization, study, work, or any other social or economic activity. Stress, long considered alien to Indian lifestyle, is now a major health problem hazard. In America, it has been found in survey conducted on workers in 2007, nearly three-quarters of workers reported experiencing physical symptoms of stress due to work. The work/life balance is another challenging task especially for the women who are primary caretakers of children and elderly loved ones faced the problem of stress.

3 Types of Nidra
Ayurveda has different opinions regarding the types of sleep. Basically Nidra can be classified into type’s viz. Svabhavika(natural) and Asvabhavika (abnormal). Out of the former Svabhavika Nidra is regular every night, whereas the later Asvabhavika is one can be due to different causes of pathological in origin.

Charak classifies the sleep condition into seven folds.
1. Tamohbava Nidra
2. Sleshma Samudbhava Nidra
3. Manah Shrama Sambhava Nidra
4. Sharira Shrama Sambhava Nidra
5. Agantuki Nidra
6. Vyadhyanuvartini Nidra
7. Ratri Svabhava Prabhava Nidra

Physiology of Nidra (sleep)

When Manas is exhausted then sleep occurs this phenomenon can be understood in this manner. According to Howell, sleep is due to cerebral ischemia. Cerebral cortex is the seat of higher centers like pre and post central gyres, association area etc., which have the correlation with mental activities described in Ayurveda. So due to the reduction in cerebral blood supply Manas becomes Klanta that causes sleep (Nidra).\(^2\) Further, during sleep, Indriyas (Both Gyanendriya and Karmendriya) become inactive by the detachment from their sense organs or from their work.

DISCUSSION

While sleep plays a vital role in our health and well-being, many underestimate the importance of a good night’s rest. According to the Sleep Foundation, studies show that 45% of Americans lack sufficient quality sleep on a daily basis. As one of the most common sleep disorders in the United States, insomnia affects 1 in 3 adults at some point in their life. Without proper rest, our body will be at risk of increased tension, irritability, and overwhelming stress.

The lack of sleep can lead to daily fatigue, causing us to exercise less and continue the vicious cycle of inactivity. Researchers believe that having a good night’s rest can improve memory and longevity, boost creativity, reduce inflammation, enhance cognitive performance, control our weight, and reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Importance of Sleep

Sleep plays an essential role in our health and well-being throughout our life. Getting enough good quality sleep has many benefits, including protecting our physical and mental health, quality of life and personal safety.

Key points

- When we sleep, important physical and mental processes are carried out.
- Regular, good quality sleep is important for brain functioning, emotional wellbeing, physical health, daytime performance and personal safety.
- Research suggests that adults need at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night to be well rested.
- Not getting enough sleep is common and can have serious impacts on our health and wellbeing.
- To restore our sleep balance, we need at least two nights in a row of unrestricted good quality sleep.

According to the National Sleep Foundation, the average adult gets six hours of snooze per night. Researchers believe that individuals should aim their target amount according to age as follows:

- Newborns (0-3 months): 14-17 hours
- Infants – Toddlers (4 months - 2 years): 12-15 hours

- Preschool - School Age Children (3 – 13 years): 12 hours
- Teenagers – Young Adults (14 – 25 years): 8 hours
- Adults – Senior Adults (26 – 65+ years): 7 hours

The foundation’s recent report in Sleep Health shows that quality sleep relies on genetic, environmental, and behavioral conditions. These factors help determine how much rest an individual needs for optimal health and daily performance.

How Poor Sleep Quality Affects Public Health

According to studies from Harvard Medical School, researchers claim that missing as little as 1.5 hours of snooze can have a major impact on alertness. Not only will it affect the ability to think and process information, it can make the person feel moody and irritated. As a result, they will become more prone to conflicts with others, less likely to participate in daily activities and even put their health at risk.

Therefore, if person continue to go without quality rest, he may experience long-term health problems in the near future. In fact, some of the most vital snooze problems may lead to a higher risk of heart attacks, chronic sleep deprivation, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions.

What happens when we sleep?

When we sleep, our bodies rest – conserving energy and decreasing blood pressure, heart rate, breathing and body temperature. At the same time, our brains remain active – laying down memory, restoring daytime mental functioning and carrying out processes that lead to physical growth.

There are five stages of sleep, progressing from stage 1 (light sleep) through stages 3 and 4 (deep sleep) to stage 5 known as rapid eye movement (REM) sleep.

Sleep is thought to play an important role in the following processes.

1. Controlling our body temperature and energy use (metabolism).
2. Keeping our immune system working.
3. Controlling our brain functioning and restoring our memory.
4. Keeping our heart and blood vessels healthy.

Effects of improper Nidra (sleep)

If person regularly aren’t getting enough sleep, their sleep loss adds up. The total sleep lost is called their sleep debt. For example, if you lose 2 hours of sleep each night, you’ll have a sleep debt of 14 hours after a week.

The harm caused by not getting enough sleep can be immediate, such as in having an accident due to not being able to focus and respond quickly. Other effects can take years to develop, such as an increased risk of developing a chronic health problem.
Lack of good sleep can lead to:
- excessive daytime sleepiness, tiredness and lethargy
- morning headaches
- poor memory and difficulty focusing
- anxiety and depression
- chronic health problems such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease
- an increased risk of alcohol and drug dependence
- having a car accident
- making mistakes at work, including causing accidents
- relationship problems
- lack of sex drive.

In young people, lack of quality sleep may have a direct effect on their health, development, behavior and ability to socialize and get along with their peers.

Repairing tissues and stimulating growth in children (growth hormone released during sleep is responsible for both).
- Regulating our appetite and weight and controlling our blood glucose levels.

If we aren’t getting enough sleep on a regular basis, these processes are interrupted and our risk of developing long-term health problems increases.

CONCLUSION
Man of this techno-world is trying to get overcome such harmonious features by elaborating his mental dimensions. But the biological clock which is mandatory for the well-being of human life’s rhythm is not ready to recognize these upsetting created by him. Once this harmony is violated his sleep as well as total health is hampered, because sleep exactly runs according to biological clock. The importance of sleep is well accepted by modern science also because of its restorative, recuperative and resting actions to the living organism.

Sleep deprivation is a trademark of modern society lack of sleep not only has serious mental, emotional and physical effects, but also effects in success in school career and life. So we have to educate people on the importance of Nidra (sleep) and dangers of not getting enough the better off we will be as a society. Advocacy for Nidra (sleep) quantity, and hygiene at occupational, institutional and various high-risk groups settings through regulations on work hours, work shift patterns, behaviors modification measures etc should be an agenda for public health professionals.

REFERENCES